

**Community Preservation Act Committee (CPAC)**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, January 21, 2010**

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm by Peter Jessop, Chair, in the Town Room at Town Hall.

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Denise Barberet, John Gerber, Louis Greenbaum, Michael Jacques, Peter Jessop, Chair; Ellen Kosmer, Mary Streeter, Clerk; Vince O'Connor (arr. 9:13), Vice Chair; Stan Ziomek

**STAFF / OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Sonia Aldrich, Donna Crabtree, Bonnie Isman, Tevis Kimball, Roy Rosenblatt, Jonathan Tucker, David Ziomek, Diana Stein, M. J. Adams, Rita Farrell, P. Lutz, Carol Gray, Pat Holland, Sarah McKee, Jim Wald, others

**Agenda**

1. Affordable Housing proposals 7:10 pm
2. Historic Preservation Proposals 8:00 pm
3. Discussion amongst committee members on the previous proposals
4. Public hearing details
5. Approve any minutes
6. Adjourn

Peter welcomed everyone, and suggested we may have more questions after the presentations. The main purpose of this meeting is to hear in more detail the proposals for Affordable Housing and Historic Preservation.

**Affordable Housing Presentations**

**Housing Partnership/Fair Housing Committee University Drive Affordable Housing – 44 units – \$150,000 reallocated CPA funds plus \$750,000 over 10 years**

Roy Rosenblatt informed us that this proposal is being withdrawn at this time because further study is needed. The HP/FH Committee still favors building affordable housing on this site, however, rezoning, a market study, and wetlands determination are needed.

Roy Rosenblatt reminded us that \$150,000 in previously allocated funds for a mortgage subsidy program would be returned to CPA.

**Habitat for Humanity – 4<sup>th</sup> Home on Stanley Street – \$50,000**

M. J. Adams said applications for this fourth home will be accepted in early April 2010. Habitat for Humanity's request for funds is higher this year because previous funding for photovoltaics from Mass. Tech. Collaborative grants is no longer available. These systems cost about \$18,000 but significantly lower electricity costs for the homeowners. Depending on funding, construction is likely to begin in the late spring with a completion date of April 2011. Each house costs approximately \$125,000 with 0% financing and will have an affordable housing restriction in perpetuity. Land was donated by Amherst College. As mortgage money is paid back to Habitat, it is reinvested in the building of more homes. Habitat does additional fundraising to defray the costs of building as well as using volunteer help and in-kind donations. The UMass Landscape Department will assist with landscaping. Partial funding by CPA now with the remainder in the fall may be possible but could cause cash flow problems.

**~~Amherst Housing Authority Renovations Phase 1 – 10 units/ 5 duplexes on Stanley, Jenks, and Olympia – \$145,000 and phase 2 next year \$205,000 – 22 units/11 duplexes in 1 year -- \$350,000~~**

Donna Crabtree informed us that this proposal has changed as indicated above. The plan is to renovate up to 22 units of low-income rental housing. They are duplexes that are 18 to 22 years old on 5 sites throughout town in neighborhood settings. A 20-year Summary Replacement Analysis has been completed, which indicates a need for \$1,756,000 in total proposed project expense or \$80,000 per unit, which does not include soft costs which are estimated to be an additional 6 to 10% or \$150,000. Soft costs are costs for an architect to write up specs, and some relocation funds during construction. A commitment letter from the Mass. Department of Community Affairs indicates that funds that CPA contributes will be matched. Rita Farrell of the Mass. Housing Partnership said she wasn't sure that the funds would cover renovations in all 22 units. Ms. Crabtree said there would be an additional amount of up to \$350,000 from the CDBG grant, which hopefully could also be matched. Because it is a pilot program, matching funds would only be available for Amherst this year. In future years funding will be on a competitive basis with only \$5 million available for the entire state, which has 55,000 units of affordable housing. Federal weatherization funds are also currently available. For these reasons the AHA decided to revise their proposal to seek all the funding this year rather than over 2 years.

Denise expressed concern about the estimated costs for appliances and \$150 each for new mailboxes. Appliances would be replaced with Energy Star models. Tankless water heaters would be installed. Mary was concerned that doors, cabinets, toilets, etc. on such relatively new units would have to be replaced. Ms. Crabtree responded that the original doors were hollow core, the cabinets were laminated particleboard that will be replaced with plywood cabinets, and low flow toilets would be installed. Peter said these costs per unit were not out of line in his experience. Mary asked whether part of the requested amount could be in the form of a loan for 2 or 3 year to maximize the matching funds. Peter and Sonia will check with the Treasurer concerning whether this is a possibility. Ms. Crabtree thanked the committee for its past support of affordable housing. John asked the submitters of this proposal to ask the Department of Housing and Community Development if they would accept a two-year commitment of \$175,000 per year.

**Historic Preservation Presentations**

Jonathan Tucker gave a brief overview of the historic preservation proposals. The Emily Dickinson Museum has withdrawn its request for \$50,000. The Historical Commission has postponed the following proposals until next year:

West Cemetery Headstone & Monument Restoration Phase 2 – \$100,000  
Town Common Historical Research and Survey – \$25,000

The Historical Commission voted to recommend rescission of the following previously appropriated funds:

\$81,000.00	Hills Lot Purchase
7,500.00	Bay Road Archaeological Site Survey
3,544.58	West Cemetery Entrance Design
<u>6,635.00</u>	East Common Historical Research
<b>\$98,679.58</b>	<b>Proposed FY11 Rescissions</b>

Mr. Tucker said that the Town has recently issued a new bond to fund the previously obligated Town Hall repair. This will extend the repayment period but the total amount paid out will be less.

**Previously Obligated – \$55,368**

Kimball House – \$25,600

Town Hall Masonry Funding – \$29,768 (revised)

**Town Clerk & Special Collections Archival Materials – \$20,000 total**

Tevis Kimball of the Jones Library Special Collections Department explained the ongoing nature of protecting archival materials. Current and future preservation tasks include converting old Town Meeting tapes and Robert Frost recordings to newer media, putting old Amherst newspapers on microfilm, making copy negatives of photos, etc. She said all new work will be preserved electronically as well as by the standard process of microfilm. Copy negatives need to be made for some of the photographic collections such as Frost, Dickinson, and Barnes photos. Any nitrate film needs to be identified and converted into a different format. Mary asked whether the Library could make more of these materials available to the public via the web or whether a CD or DVD of materials such as the Frost recordings could be created as a means to help with expenses to preserve these collections. Complications related to copyright might make this difficult.

**Amherst History Museum – roof repair, electrical update, window frame repair & UV protection – \$45,000**

Patricia Lutz of the Amherst History Museum said the roof over the Ell built in the 1740's needs to be replaced because the asphalt shingles put on in the 1970's are chipping away. She described the electrical system in the house that is obsolete, potentially dangerous, and needs updating. The exterior lighting is poor and there has been vandalism in the darker outside areas. The museum understands that a permanent historical restriction will need to be added to their deed.

**Jones Library Roof Restoration – \$40,000**

Bonnie Isman described the status of the slate roof over the historic section of the library. The roof study funded last year cost \$3000. The most serious leak has been repaired using remaining funds from that project. The FY11 proposal for \$40,000 would cover repairs over additional areas where slates are falling off, and in general, stabilize the roof. Peter asked whether there was a deed restriction on the library. Mr. Tucker responded that it is a quasi-public structure which receives other public funds. Louis stated that the Trust states that the library is for the benefit and enjoyment of the inhabitants of Amherst.

**North Amherst Library Exterior Work – \$12,000**

Ms. Isman distributed photos of the North Amherst library depicting the need for paint and repairs to the exterior and the need for insulation in the basement. Louis stressed that the insulation would help prevent condensation. Sarah McKee, Library Trustee, discussed options for paint with regard to costs and how long it is predicted to last.

**Library Special Collections HVAC – \$30,000** request is on hold for the time being while further information is being sought. Carol Gray, Library Trustee, discussed efforts at energy savings, use of green technology, and the HVAC study that has not been done yet. The technology for the current HVAC is outdated, based on pneumatics. The estimates obtained to date vary considerably. Ms. Isman said the current system never worked properly even when new so a good engineering study must be done to help decide whether a new system is needed or the old one can be repaired.

**Financial Review**

Sonia said we do not need to get Town Meeting approval for the funds being returned from the Mortgage Subsidy program or the Historic Preservation rescissions. This amount totals \$248,679.58. When added to the \$17,200 previously set aside for housing, the state match, last year's balance, and this year's surcharge, we will have up to \$778,045.37 available to fund new projects or to set aside for the future. We discussed projects withdrawn from this year's list which

are likely to come back before us next year. John urged Mr. Wald and Mr. Tucker to give us a clear priority for the historic preservation proposals.

We discussed the importance of legal ads for public hearings appearing in both the Gazette and Bulletin. Sonia will do that. Peter will contact Scott Merzbach to write an additional CPA story.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Stan and seconded to adjourn at 9:20 pm. Voted unanimously.

#### **NEXT MEETINGS**

Our meetings will usually occur on the third Thursday of the month from September through April. Our next meeting will be **February 4, 2010 at 7:00 pm** in the Town Room of Town Hall when we will hear Open Space and Recreation presentations. Additional meetings are scheduled for Feb. 18 (Public Hearing), March 18, and April 15, 2010.

#### **DOCUMENTS DISTRIBUTED**

- Agenda
- FY2011 CPA Proposals at a Glance, 1 page
- Minutes of December 17, 2009, 3 pages
- Minutes of January 7, 2009, 7 pages
- Spreadsheet "Financial Status for CPA Funds" 1/21/10, 2 pages
- CPA Debt Service 1/21/10, 2 pages
- Packet of Affordable Housing documents, 37 pages
- Letter to Peter Jessop from Amy Schectman of Mass. Dept. of Housing and Community Development 1/20/10, 1 page
- Response to CPAC questions from Donna Crabtree, "Amherst Housing Authority Renovations", 1 page
- Packet of Historic Preservation documents, 53 pages
- Color photos of North Amherst Library, 3 pages

Respectfully submitted by Mary Streeter, Clerk

Approved February 4, 2010